

APPENDIX I

ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY OF EASTERN SIBERIA IN 1943

KRASNOYARSK KRAI

The capital, Krasnoyarsk (190,000 inhabitants), derives its main significance from the fact that it is a center of communications; for, like almost all important towns of Eastern Siberia, Krasnoyarsk is situated at the point where the Trans-Siberian Railway crosses one of the great Siberian rivers, in this case the Yenisei. It is the seat of many factories, a forestry institute, a teachers' seminary, and twelve technical schools.

Minusinsk (25,000) is the center of an agricultural and industrial district and the gateway for commercial relations with Tannu Tuva. Other towns in the environment of Krasnoyarsk are Kansk (30,000), Aghinsk (13,000), Yeniseisk (18,000), and Abakan (17,000). The station of Taishet has been mentioned frequently in the press because the new railway to the lower Amur, known as the BAM, branches off here from the old Trans-Siberian Railway.

As a result of the encouragement of maritime traffic through the Arctic Ocean, four towns near the mouth of the Yenisei have grown rapidly during the last ten years. All lying north of the Arctic Circle they are: Igarka (20,000), Dudinka (30,000), Ust-Yeniseysky Port, and Norilsk. By means of a short railroad, Norilsk supplies coal to Dudinka and thus to the Arctic/Yenisei maritime traffic. In the midst of the wilderness there is Tura, the administrative center of the Tunguses living in the Evenks National Okrug.

Achinsk on the Trans-Siberian Railway is connected with Abakan and Minusinsk by rail. From the latter town, a highway leads to the capital of Tannu Tuva (formerly Kizil, now named Krasny, meaning red, by the Bolsheviks) and on to Ulias-sutai (Djibulantu) in Outer Mongolia.

IRKUTSK OBLAST

Irkutsk (243,400) is situated where the Trans-Siberian Railway touches the Angara, a navigable tributary of the Yenisei, 66 kilometers below the point where the Angara flows out of Lake Baikal. Irkutsk has a university, seven high schools, fifteen technical schools, five scientific institutions, and four theaters.

On the railway line northwest of Irkutsk there are the towns of Usolye (8,000), which lies in a salt-mining district; Cheremkhovo (10,000), surrounded by a large coal district; and Tulun, with agricultural surroundings. Slyudyanka, on the southeastern corner of Lake Baikal, is the center of the mica industry. Bodaibo (10,000), situated northeast of Lake Baikal on a tributary of the Lena River, is important on account of the gold found in its environments. Ilimsk, on the Ilim River, a tributary of the Angara, has large iron and steel works. The BAM railway touches it, and it is also connected with Cheremkhovo by another railway line running south. Its great wealth of coal and ores has made Irkutsk Oblast the third largest coal- and metal-producing district of the USSR and the main center of Siberia's armament production.

BURYAT-MONGOL ASSR

The majority of the population living in this republic consists of Buryats and other natives. The capital is Ulan-Ude (129,417), formerly called Verkhne-Udinsk, situated at the point where the Trans-Siberian Railway crosses the Selenga River, which flows into Lake Baikal. In the course of the war, not only industrial works but also scientific institutions have been transplanted from European Russia into Siberia. But such removals become known only by chance. Of Ulan-Ude we know that, among others, an optical institution with its workshops has been evacuated there. Besides this, the town possesses a number of educational institutions from former days. A railway is being built from here to Ulan-Bator, meaning "Red Hero" (formerly Urga), the capital of Outer Mongolia. Its completion as far as Kiakhta has been confirmed, but it is not known whether it has reached Ulan-Bator as yet. In any case, Ulan-Bator is connected with Ulan-Ude by a motor road and, since 1929, by an air line.

CHITA OBLAST

Although the Amur Railway does not branch off from the line running on to Manchouli and Harbin at Chita itself but a few kilometers further east at Karymsk, part of the importance of Chita (102,600) is to be found in the fact that it is situated near the junction of these two lines. Chita is regarded as the military center of the territory between Lake Baikal and the border of Manchoukuo and is for that reason connected with the border by numerous motor roads and probably also by a number of railways. However, the positions of these routes of communication are veiled in such secrecy that we are not able to show details on our map.

Petrovsk, Nerchinsk, and Sryetensk are important industrial centers with more than 10,000 inhabitants each.

YAKUT ASSR

This republic, three quarters of whose inhabitants are natives, is still at the very beginning of its industrial development. In 1939 its capital, Yakutsk, had only 25,000 inhabitants, a large part of whom were the pupils of numerous high schools and institutions, since the republic lacks trained experts more than anything else. Thus Yakutsk has special schools for pedagogy, mining, structural engineering, medicine, agriculture, fur-raising, water transport, and finance.

The town of Aldansk (50,000) has developed more rapidly, as it is situated in an especially rich gold area, which supplies 25 per cent of the total gold production of the USSR.

A similar rapid development has been experienced by the towns in the northeastern part of the republic on the Kolyma River between Verkhne-Kolymsk and Ambarchik. These regions were once inhabited by the Yukaghirs, of whom there were about 30,000 at the time of the conquest of Siberia by the Russians, while hardly more than a few dozen remain today. The settlement of the lower reaches of the Kolyma, which

are rich in gold and furs, is being carried out mainly with Russians. In the years from 1933 to 1937, 57 towns and settlements were established here. The economic development has been placed in the hands of a single organization, the "Dalstroj."

KHABAROVSK KRAI

Khabarovsk, with its 200,000 inhabitants almost of the same size as Vladivostok, surpasses this town in economic and political importance and may be called the most important town east of Lake Baikal. During the last ten years its appearance has changed considerably. Numerous large buildings have been erected—factories, schools, theaters, clubs, etc. Khabarovsk lies at the crossing of the railway and the Amur River.

In the sphere of economics, the town of Komsomolsk, 370 kilometers downriver, has become a dangerous rival to Khabarovsk. Not founded until 1932 on the spot of a Cossack settlement and, as indicated by its name (Komsomol—Communist Youth Association), chiefly the work of Soviet youths assembled here for this purpose from the various parts of the Soviet Union, Komsomolsk now has a population of about 200,000. From year to year it is developing more into the military and heavy-industrial center of the Soviet Far East. Over Khabarovsk, Komsomolsk has the advantage that it is not situated, like the former, barely 50 kilometers from the border. As soon as the BAM is completed, its situation as regards communications will also surpass that of Khabarovsk, as it probably possesses by now a direct railway connection with Soviet Harbor, a port on the Gulf of Tartary. Its connections with Khabarovsk are formed by the Amur, a railway, and a motor road. Further down the Amur, near its mouth, there lies the town of Nikolayevsk (15,000), known for its role in the fishing trade of the Sea of Okhotsk, and near the river's mouth the fortress of Chnyrrakh.

The third most important town of the province is Blagoveschensk (58,000) on the Amur, connected by a branch line with the Amur Railway. Its importance has, however, decreased during the last few years, probably as the result of its proximity to the border. On the other hand, another town has grown considerably in spite of its closeness to the border—Birobidjan (50,000), the capital of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast. In order to gain Jewish sympathies and to put a spoke in the wheel of Zionism, the Soviet Union has established a kind of Jewish state in the last big bend of the Amur before it reaches Khabarovsk. The plan did not meet with much success. In spite of intensive propaganda and more or less gentle pressure, the Jewish population of this district is only around 50,000. There was little attraction for the Jews in the prospect of doing pioneer work in the midst of virgin forest and a few kilometers from a border suffering at times from great political tension.

A place marked on very few maps even of recent date but whose importance is growing every year is Magadan (15,000), which has turned from a poor native settlement into an important port with large buildings, technical schools, hospitals, and theaters. The significance of Magadan is to be found in the fact that it is the starting point for a road which connects the Sea of Okhotsk with the navigable Kolyma River and thereby with the Arctic Ocean. This route saves the huge

detour around Kamchatka and through the Bering Strait. Moreover, it runs so far in the interior of the USSR that, in contrast to the route through the Bering Strait, it is regarded by the Soviets as quite safe.

Kamchatka Oblast, which includes the outermost corner of northeastern Asia from the Arctic Ocean to Cape Lopatka on the southern point of Kamchatka Peninsula, is the most thinly populated region of the Soviet Union and among the most thinly populated regions of the whole world, as there is only one inhabitant to every eleven square kilometers. Into this corner of Siberia, remains of the original population of Siberia withdrew before the onslaught of the Russian conquerors. As a result, Kamchatka Oblast has become a kind of ethnographical museum, where one can find the strangest tribes existing nowhere else in the world, among them the Nymylans, the Luoravetlans, the Iteimans, and the Nuangans. Most of them live in the Chukot and Koryak National Okrug, while the population of the far more developed Kamchatka Peninsula contains many Slavs.

The capital of this Oblast is Petropavlovsk (20,000) on the Avacha Bay, which is excellent for purposes of navigation, as it is large enough to hold all the ships of the world. Petropavlovsk possesses dockyards, a dry dock, factories, and high schools; it is developing rapidly as an administrative as well as military center. The town gains special importance by the fact that it is situated approximately at the point where the American Aleutians meet the Japanese Kuril Islands.

Khabarovsk Krai also includes Sakhalin Oblast, which covers the northern part of that island, while the southern part belongs to Japan. It is inhabited almost entirely by Slavs, as only a few of the original inhabitants remain. The capital is Alexandrovsk (18,000), a sea and air port. Economically of greater importance is Okha (12,000), the center of oil production in the Soviet Far East. The town has grown rapidly during the last few years.

PRIMORSK (i.e., MARITIME) KRAI

The capital is Vladivostok (206,400), terminus of the Trans-Siberian Railway, naval port and the most important commercial port for maritime traffic to the coasts of Eastern Siberia, containing industrial establishments as well as several high schools and a university. In comparison to Tsarist times the city has lost somewhat in importance. At that time, northern Manchuria was under Russian control. As this is no longer the case today, Vladivostok, at the end of the narrow corridor between Manchoukuo and the sea, is now in a very unfavorable position from a strategic point of view. There are signs that the development of Soviet Harbor, which is being linked up by a railway with the Trans-Siberian Railway and which is closer to Khabarovsk than Vladivostok, will lead to a further diminution of the latter's importance.

The second most important town of the province is Voroshilov (70,600, the former Nikolsk-Ussurisk), as far as is known the center of military preparations in this province. Spassk (10,000) supplies the cement needed for the numerous new buildings and military fortifications; Lesozavodsk supplies timber, and Suchan supplies coal. The environments of Tetyukhe are rich in nonferrous metals.

